

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Mayor Announces Inaugural Indianapolis VEX Robotics City Championship**

*Roche Diagnostics Partners with City to Support STEM Career Pathways*

INDIANAPOLIS – Mayor Greg Ballard today announced the City of Indianapolis in January will host the inaugural Indianapolis VEX Robotics City Championship Presented by Roche Diagnostics aimed at inspiring students to continue with higher-level education and science, technology, engineering and mathematic (STEM) career pathways. Mayor Ballard also announced Roche Diagnostics is the presenting sponsor of the competition, which will be held at Bankers Life Fieldhouse in downtown Indianapolis January 19-20.

“This competition aims to inspire our community’s next generation of leaders and innovators,” said Mayor Ballard. “Robotics teams are an innovative and hands-on way schools across the country engage students in learning and applying STEM skills. Thanks to our partners and premier sponsor Roche Diagnostics, we are creating a climate in Indianapolis where accomplishments in academics are celebrated.”

Indianapolis is home to the North American headquarters for Roche Diagnostics, which is part of the Swiss-based Roche Group, a leader in research-focused healthcare with combined strengths in pharmaceuticals and diagnostics.

“As part of the world’s largest biotech company, the focus of our business at Roche Diagnostics relies heavily on advancements in science, technology and engineering,” said Tom Adkins, senior vice president, Roche Diagnostics Operations. “And so we’re thrilled to support this new STEM initiative, which will help engage local kids with the wonder of science to help create future innovators for our growing Central Indiana life sciences community.”

Every high school in Marion County is eligible to participate in the tournament, which exposes students to the excitement of competitive robotics and inspires many to continue on with other higher-level robotics programming and ideally, STEM career pathways. Today’s announcement was held at Warren Central High School’s Walker Career Center, a state-of-the-art facility whose staff and faculty are committed to providing students with tools and guidance necessary to compete successfully in a global and technical world. Of the 38 high schools with teams participating in the championship, 30 did not have robotics teams prior to Mayor Ballard announcing the City would host a championship. The top four teams at the championship will qualify for the Vex Robotics World Championship in Anaheim, Calif., April 17-20, 2013.

“It is a pleasure to partner with Mayor Ballard and Roche Diagnostics to provide students and educators in Indianapolis an opportunity to engage with hands-on, curriculum-based robotics programming and competitions,” said Jason Morrella, President of the Robotics Education & Competition Foundation, which is operating the Indianapolis VEX Robotics City Championship. “Our focus is to inspire students and encourage their interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics to set a foundation for future success.”

The Indianapolis city championship introduces students to robotics using the VEX Robotics Design System. Teams of two to 10 students, with guidance from their teachers and mentors, will build innovative robots to obtain points during the competition. VEX Robotics technology already is incorporated into Walker Career Center’s curriculum including principals of engineering, computer integrated manufacturing and digital electronics.

Project Lead The Way, the nation’s leading provider of STEM education, and Ivy Tech Community College are supporting the competition by providing volunteers to help run the event in January and by hosting workshops leading up to the event to help local schools prepare for competition. Also partnering on the championships is TechPoint Foundation for Youth, a nonprofit venture philanthropic organization with the mission to inspire the next generation of STEM leaders among Indiana’s underserved youth populations. In October, TechPoint Foundation for Youth announced plans to pilot a collaborative STEM space for Central Indiana.

For more information, please visit [www.vexrobotics.com](http://www.vexrobotics.com) and [www.robotevents.com](http://www.robotevents.com).

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